Florida Universal Pre-K Conference: A Brand New Day

Friday, November 15, 2002
Disney's Contemporary Resort
Orlando, Florida

Convened by
Mayor Alex Penelas
Miami-Dade County

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Greetings:

Starting right now we are entering a new era in educating Florida's children. On November 5th, the people spoke with a clear, loud voice. They said, as so many of us hoped they would, that all children must have the right to a pre-kindergarten education - regardless of their economic, social or demographic status.

We are meeting today at the *Florida Universal Pre-K Conference* to begin the process of structuring and implementing this new day in early education.

We have traveled a long road - figuratively and literally. We went to the far corners of our State, gathered almost a million signatures - fought court battles, and finally - city by city, street by street -- we brought our message of progress to voters.

Now we have come to this wonderful moment -- armed with a new constitutional amendment, and flushed with victory -- we begin the arduous job of developing a strategy that will bring Pre-K benefits to all of our children.

There are too many people to thank in this short message, hundred upon hundreds of workers and volunteers giving of their time, energy and resources. But, it is probable that much of this would not have happened without the dreams and passion of David Lawrence Jr. And, we must be grateful for his zeal and resolution.

It is appropriate that we meet here in this kingdom for children to begin this vital phase of our long quest to bring to all of our children the blessings of early education. I am greatful for your presence.

Sincerely,

Alex Penelas
Mayor
Miami-Dade County

VOLUNTARY UNIVERSAL PRE-KINDERGARTEN EDUCATION CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT 8

Article IX, Section 1 of the Florida Constitution is hereby amended to renumber Section 1 as Section 1(a) and to add the following Sections 1(b) and (c):

(b) Every four-year old child in Florida shall be provided by the State a high quality pre-kindergarten learning opportunity in the form of an early childhood development and education program which shall be voluntary, high quality, free, and delivered according to professionally accepted standards. An early childhood development and education program means an organized program designed to address and enhance each child's ability to make age appropriate progress in an appropriate range of settings in the development of language and cognitive capabilities and emotional, social, regulatory and moral capacities through education in basic skills and such other skills as the Legislature may determine to be appropriate.

(c) The early childhood education and development programs provided by reason of subparagraph (b) shall be implemented no later than the beginning of the 2005 school year through funds generated in addition to those used for existing education, health, and development programs. Existing education, health, and development programs are those funded by the State as of January 1, 2002 that provided for child or adult education, health care, or development.

Summary: Every four-year-old child in Florida shall be offered a high quality pre-kindergarten learning opportunity by the state no later than the 2005 school year. This voluntary early childhood development and education program shall be established according to high quality standards and shall be free for all Florida four-year-olds without taking away funds used for existing education, health and development programs.

WHEREAS, infancy and early childhood development set the stage for a child's future ability to interact socially and achieve academically, and extensive research on the human brain shows that from birth to age 5 children rapidly develop the language and cognitive capabilities and emotional, social, regulatory and moral capacities upon which child development proceeds. To this end, these critical dimensions must be nurtured in early, high quality, active learning pre-kindergarten programs for all Florida four-year-old children to provide both short and long-term benefits, including later school success.

WHEREAS, it is not advisable to mandate such pre-kindergarten programs for all children, but rather to require such programs to be available to all children who wish to participate therein, and thus to permit the parents, custodian, guardian or other caregiver to make the individual determination on behalf of each of Florida's four-year olds whether to participate therein.

WHEREAS, existing resources of public institutions are limited in their ability to support additional demand, and therefore a range of pre-kindergarten settings, including school sites, childcare facilities and homes, both public and non-public, should house pre-kindergarten programming, so that parents, custodians, guardians, or other caregivers may have choices among school settings, curricula and services in order to preserve their role as the primary protector of the welfare of the children.

WHEREAS, current available knowledge accepts three primary essentials for school readiness: 1) that children are physically healthy, rested and well nourished; 2) that they are able to communicate needs, wants and thoughts verbally; 3) and that they are enthusiastic and curious in approaching new activities; accordingly, high quality pre-kindergarten programs should reflect an understanding of how children learn by providing appropriate preschool experiences emphasizing basic skills including growth in language, literacy, math concepts, science arts, physical development and personal and social competence.

WHEREAS, current knowledge dictates that a high quality pre-kindergarten learning opportunity must operate according to standards that require a core curriculum and interactive, age appropriate, individualized programming delivered according to children's unique scheduling needs and which promote and enhance children's feelings of comfort and self-esteem, and further dictates the importance of appropriate staffing ratios, teacher qualifications and professional development, physical environment, and the protection of child health and safety, and therefore, it is necessary to operate the Florida early childhood development and education program according to professionally accepted standards.

WHEREAS, Florida currently has many fine education, development and health care programs that seek to address the needs of children and adults but current resources do not meet the full demand for such programs, and therefore the early childhood education and development program described herein must be implemented in such a way as not to remove any funds from any existing education, development or health care program.

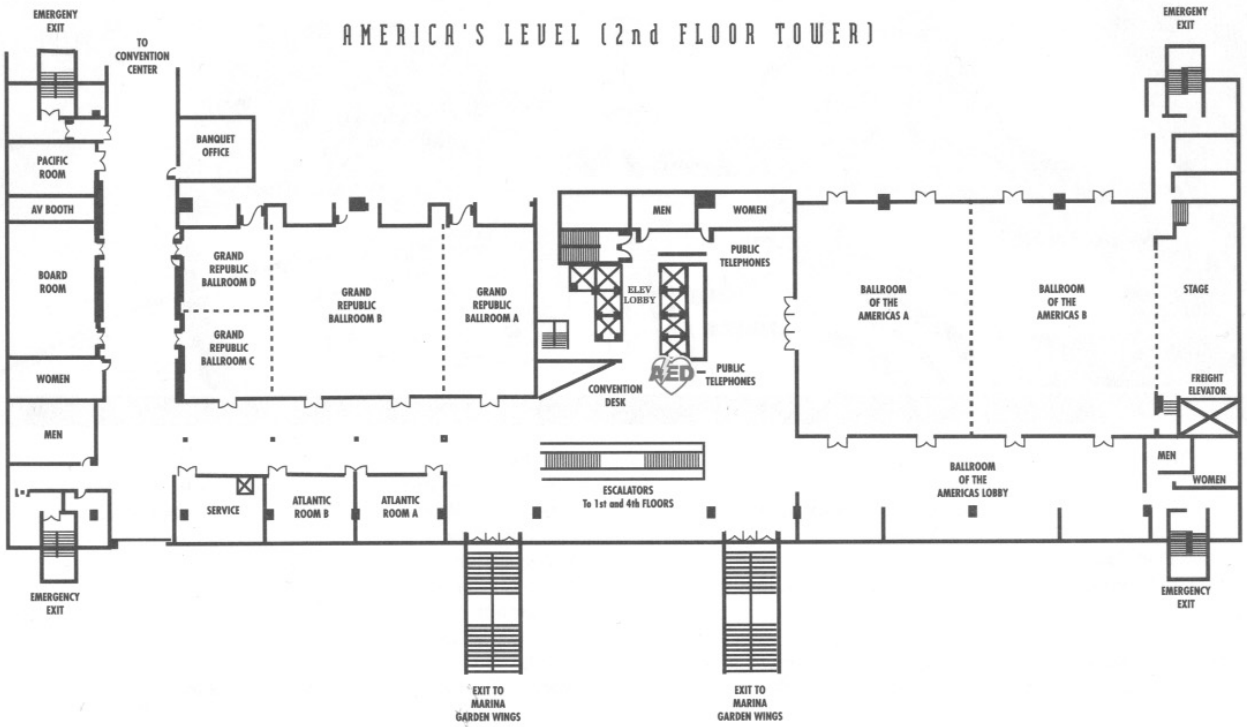
Program Schedule

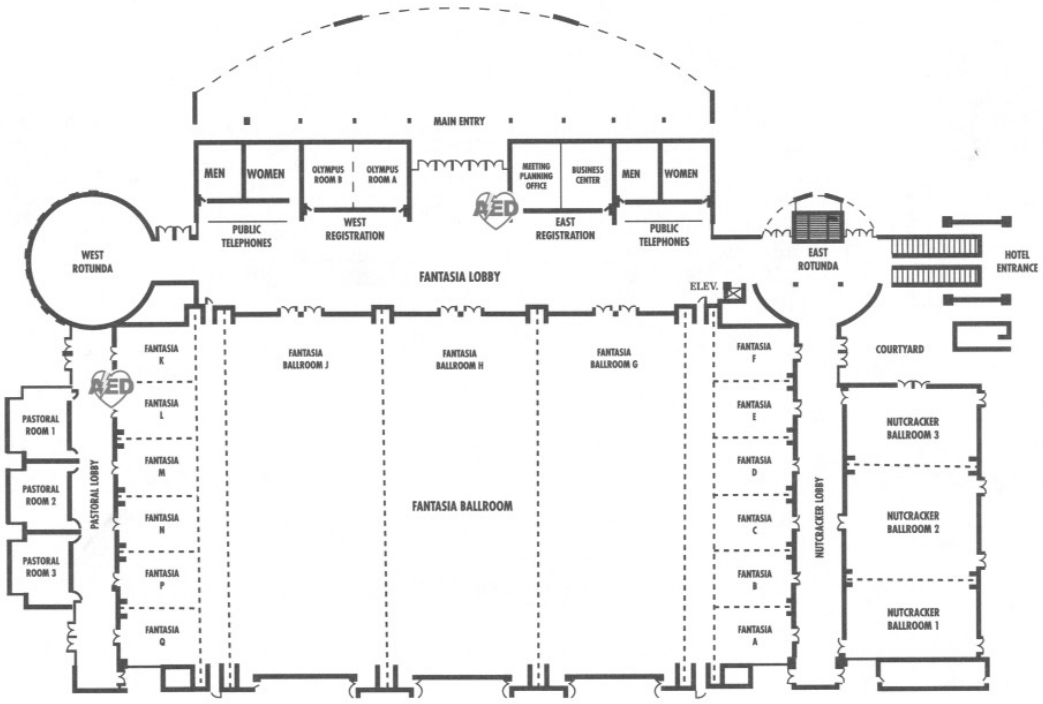
(In order of appearance)

7:30am - 9:00am	**Registration**
9:00am - 10:30am	**Opening Session (Fantasia Ballroom H)** **Phyllis Kalifeh, President, Florida Children's Forum** **Ona Brown** **Pledge of Alligence** **Invocation** **The Discovery YMCA After school Zone Jazz Band** **David Lawrence** **Mayor Alex Penelas** **Maurice Sykes** **CMS Music Factory: Conway Middle School** **YMCA Afterschool Program**
10:30am - 10:45am	**Break**
10:45am - 12:00pm	**Concurrent Workshops (pt. 1)***
Noon - 1:00pm	**Lunch**
1:00pm - 3:00pm	**Concurrent Workshops (pt. II)**
3:00pm - 3:30pm	**Break**
3:30pm - 5:00pm	**Closing Session (Fantasia Ballroom H)** **Wihelmina Tribble, Lowe, Tribble and Associates** **Mayor Penelas** **Invited State Legislators**

*Locations to be announced

Disney Contemporary Floor Plan





CONVENTION CENTER

Mayor Alex Penelas

Miami-Dade County, Florida

Conference Convenor

Alex Penelas is the first executive Mayor of Miami-Dade County, Florida. He was elected in 1996 and is currently serving his second four-year term.

As Executive Mayor, he represents 2.1 million residents and exercises authority over the largest metropolitan government in the Southeastern United States, with a budget in excess of $5 billion dollars. His administration has focused on reducing crime and corruption, senior citizens' and children's issues, all while streamlining government.

Mayor Penelas has amassed a substantial record. The first initiative of his mayoral administration was the comprehensive crime fighting measure called "Operation Safe Streets," that targets specific crime areas and has dramatically reduced violent crimes to the lowest levels in four decades.

One of the Mayor's major concerns is the state of children. His program called "Champion Our Children," details long-range plans to better prepare children in the county to begin school, and addresses obstacles to healthy child development such as poor healthcare and nutrition, inadequate day care, and child abuse. He proclaimed 1999 "The Year of the Child" and convened the first Mayor's Children Summit to develop a long-range plan for children in Miami-Dade. More than 5,000 citizens attended. In 2001, with support from the Mayor's budget, the county's Head Start program expanded enrollment by 4,000 -- reducing the waiting list by 90%. On a statewide level, he spearheaded the Universal Pre-K campaign - to provide voluntary pre-kindergarten education to all Florida four year olds.

Mayor Penelas has also focused on helping senior citizens. Thanks to his Save Our Seniors program elderly residents living on limited resources are entitled to a double homestead exemption and substantial property tax relief.

To promote economic development, Mayor Penelas convened the second Mayor's Economic Summit in January 2002 where residents, business and community leaders helped develop an action plan for redefining Miami-Dade's economic future; and created the Mayor's International Trade Council (MITC) to coordinate global trade and commerce agendas for Miami-Dade - which included the Mayor's Africa Trade Task Force created to develop cultural and business relationships with African nations.

He entered public service as a Councilman for the City of Hialeah (1987 - 1990), and became the youngest person ever elected to the Miami-Dade Board of County Commissioners where he served for six years before being elected Mayor.

In an ambitious undertaking as an elected official, Mayor Penelas coauthored the Community Homeless Plan, one of the most comprehensive, and nationally recognized, homeless programs in the country.

Mayor Penelas is a summa cum laude graduate of Biscayne College (now St. Thomas University), where he received a B.A. in Political Science, and a 1985 cum laude graduate of the University of Miami School of Law. He also received an honorary Doctor of Law degree from St. Thomas University. He was formerly of counsel to the law firm of Shutts & Bowen.

Mayor Penelas' serves on the Board of Directors of the March of Dimes; the Florida League of Cities; and he is a member of the Knights of Columbus and the Democratic National Committee; and has received hundreds of recognitions, including:

- U.S. Junior Chamber of Commerce's Top Ten Outstanding Young Americans;
- National Transportation Safety Board's Outstanding Service Award;
- Excellence in Government Award from the National Association of Hispanic Public Administrators and the Federation of Black Employees;
- Greater Miami Jewish Federation's Outstanding Community Leadership Award;
- Miami Boys and Girls Clubs Person of the Year;
- Woodrow Wilson Award for Public Service,
- The Abraham Lincoln Award for gun safety advocacy, and
- FCF Business Leadership Award.

Mayor Penelas was born in Miami in 1961. He and his wife Lilliam, and their sons William and Christopher are lifelong residents of Miami-Dade County.

Opening Session Speakers

Ona Brown

When Ona Brown was a little girl, there were some who saw her as a little more than a chatty child with too many questions in her head. Soon, though, she became known for her inquisitive nature, thoughtful responses and ability to make everyone- from 8 to 80- feel better about themselves after talking with her.

Today, she utilizes her natural gifts to inspire others to their greatest capacities through her writings and consulting firm, Divine Order Communications, which works with individuals and companies to improve personal productivity. Ona is the author of, AFFIRMACISE, a book that explores mind-and-spirit fitness. She is also a talented motivational speaker and daughter of renowned motivational speaker Les Brown.

Ona attended college and worked in various elite environments to expand her knowledge and experiences. Following the tragic death of her younger brother, Chad, and subsequent battles with depression and weight, Ona returned to her roots...her passion...helping others develop their capacities.

She immersed herself in the teachings of the self-help movement, studied under the tutelage of Les Brown, and launched Divine Order Communications in 1995 to inspire people to live lives of greatness and to triumph over the challenges faced daily in the game of life.

"I have been on a journey for truth since I was a young girl," says Ona. "I know that my Dharma, or purpose, is to be a bearer of truth, love and inspiration. I want to inspire people to live lives of greatness, and to triumph over the challenges that face each of us in the game of life."

A Chicago resident, Ona is deeply committed to meditating and life fitness, and occasionally enjoys some sweet potato pie. She is currently working on her second book, which discusses the power of knowing thyself.

Ona Brown Transformations

Ona...
To see (Swahili)
The way (Yoruba)
Precious Jewel (Ebou)

Brown...
One of the many colors found between black and white... symbolic of the earth, which nurtures the seeds of life

Transformations...
Implies a major change in form, nature, or function. To go beyond the form which has been known.

David Lawrence Jr.

David Lawrence Jr. retired in 1999 as publisher of The Miami Herald to work in the area of early childhood development and readiness. He is president of The Early Childhood Initiative Foundation and "University Scholar for Early Childhood Development and Readiness" at the University of Florida. He chairs the Children's Services Council of Miami-Dade County and co-chairs that community's School Readiness Coalition. He was named by Gov. Jeb Bush to the Florida Partnership for School Readiness board, which he chairs. He is a board member of the Foundation for Child Development in New York. He currently chairs the Governor's Blue Ribbon Panel on Child Protection. And he led the successful campaign for The Children's Trust, a dedicated source of early intervention and preventing funding for children in Miami-Dade County.

Before coming to Miami in 1989, he was publisher and executive editor of the Detroit Free Press. He came to the Free Press in 1978 from the Charlotte Observer where he was editor. He joined then Knight Newspapers (now Knight-Ridder) in 1971. (During his tenure as publisher of The Miami Herald, the paper won five Pulitzer Prizes.)

He is a graduate of the University of Florida and named "Outstanding Journalism Graduate." He graduated from the Advanced Management program at the Harvard Business School in 1983. In 1988, he was honored with Knight-Ridder's top award, the John S. Knight Gold Medal. He was honored (1980) as "Distinguished Alumnus" of the University of Florida Journalism School and similarly (1982) by the university, then presented an honorary doctorate in 1993. He has eight other honorary doctorates. His national honors include the Ida B. Wells Award "for exemplary leadership in providing minorities employment opportunities in journalism" and the National Association of Minority Media Executives award for "lifetime achievement in diversity." His writing awards include the First Amendment Award from the Scripps Howard Foundation and the Inter American Press Association Commentary Award. He served two terms as chair of the national Task Force on Minorities in the Newspaper Business, was the 1991-92 president of the American Society of Newspaper Editors and the 1995-96 president of the Inter American Press Association.

His board activity: The Miami Art Museum and United Way (each formerly as chair), the New World School of the Arts, NCCJ and the University of Florida Foundation. As a member of the Governor's Commission on Education, he chaired the Readiness Committee. He was the local convening co-chair of the 1994 Summit of the Americas. And he is the co-founder of a non-profit vocational-technical school in Port-au-Prince, Haiti.

He and his wife Roberta live in Coral Gables and have three daughters and two sons. His honors include: "Family of the Year" from Family Counseling Services. "Father of the Year" by the South Florida Father's Day Council. "Child Advocate of the Year" by Family Central. "Health Care Hero" by the Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce. The Pacesetter Award of the Florida Children's Forum. The Children's Week Chiles Advocacy Award. Public Policy Award of the Early Childhood Association of Florida. Angels of Mercy Award.

Featured Speaker
Maurice Sykes

Maurice Sykes is an urban educator who consults on systemic change, early childhood education, and early literacy acquisition. As the former Deputy Superintendent for the Center for Systemic Educational Change and Director of Early Childhood Programs for the District of Columbia Public Schools, he has demonstrated his ability to take charge of change and brought significant innovations to the D.C. Public Schools' educational reform agenda. While at the U.S. Department of Education, where he served as an Educational Program Specialist, Sykes advised the department on educational policy and programs related to urban school improvement. Sykes has served as a teacher, a teacher trainer, and a curriculum developer. He directed the Tufts University Day Care Center in Somerville, Massachusetts, where he held a joint appointment as Assistant Professor in the Elliot Pearson Child Study Department. He also directed the Education Policy Fellowship Program at the Institute for Educational Leadership, where he trained mid-career educational leaders. Sykes has provided consultation to the Florida "Smart Start" initiative. He also serves as the principal early childhood consultant for the Memphis "Getting Schools Ready for Children" initiative, as well as Washington, D.C.'s "Safe Passages" initiative. He has written numerous publications and spoken across the nation on the need for schools and communities to "do the right thing" for children. Sykes was profiled as an "Early Childhood Champion" in a national study released in 1997 by the National Association of State Boards of Education. Most recently, he was elected to the Board of the National Association for the Education of Young Children.

Thank You

We would like to thank the following individuals for helping to produce today's event. We appreciate their commitment to the children of our state.

Office of the Mayor
Erica McKinney
Josefina Triana
Manny Gonzalez
David Perez
Lynn Norman-Teck
Laurie Flink
Lyn Harris

Disney's Contemporary Resort
Jose Mota
Carianne Stentson-Visi
Ryan Haanstra
Kelly Darden

The Early Childhood Initiative Foundation
David Lawrence Jr.
Karen Liederman

The Florida Children's Forum
Phyllis Kalifeh
Gina Kinchlow
Joy Stover

Family Central, Inc.
Barbara Weinstein
Evelyn Grooms
Rosalyn Laney

Kaplan
Evan Goldman
Sarah Bradley

Performers
CMS Music Factory: Conway Middle School YMCA Afterschool Program
The Discovery YMCA After school Zone Jazz Band

Workshops/Facilitaturs/Reference Materials
Jesse Leinfelder, Associate Director, Mailman Segal Institute
Muriel Wong Lundgren, National Institute for Innovative Leadership
Wilhelmina Tribble, Lowe, Tribble and Associates
Ophelia Brown-Lawson, Director, Miami-Dade Community Action Agency
Suzanne Gellens, Executive Director, Early Childhood Association of Florida
John Gold

A very special thanks to Kaplan Early Learning for supplying conference materials and décor.

Concurrent Workshops

This section provides information to stimulate thinking and expand visions about Universal Pre-Kindergarten (UPK) in Florida.

The seven identified workshop topics define the territory Florida must address to create a viable high-quality Pre-K program. For each of the topics a key question is posed and bulleted background information is provided. These items direct our attention to issues to consider during the facilitated discussions.

Reprinted articles provide additional information to guide our planning and implementation work.

KEY WORKSHOP QUESTIONS:

Program Administration:
How should UPK be administered and what should the relationship be to existing school readiness and child care licensing activities?

Partnerships with Providers and Schools:
What roles in UPK should be played by the school system, Head Start, and the child care industry?

Teacher Qualifications and Staff Development:
What staff qualifications should be required for UPK? What staff development activities should be available?

Staff-Child Ratios and Length of Day/Year:
What staff-child ratios should be required for UPK? What length of day and year should be adopted for UPK?

Program and Curriculum Elements:
What program and curriculum elements should be implemented in UPK programs?

Comprehensive Services:
What provisions should be made for comprehensive services for children and families in UPK?

Measuring Outcomes:
How should the success of UPK be measured?

Program Administration

Facilitators:
Phyllis Kalifeh
President/CEO
Florida Children's Forum
Tallahassee

Desiree' Reddick-Head
State TA Specialist-Region IV
National Child Care Information Center
Atlanta, GA

Betty Key
Director
Division of Early Childhood Programs
Miami-Dade County Schools

Key Question: How should Universal Pre-K be administered and what should the relationship be to existing school readiness and child care licensing activities?

- 1999 legislation established the Florida Partnership for School Readiness and local School Readiness Coalitions to construct a seamless early childhood system linking the child care financial aid (subsidy) program, Pre-K, and other related early childhood programs.

- The Partnership has been faced with staffing, timing, and administrative challenges. It was charged with inventing itself while simultaneously supporting local Coalitions.

- Coalitions were provided limited funding, and were mandated to serve no fewer children while attempting to coordinate and improve services. A local plan had to be submitted to the Partnership, but time and resources for comprehensive planning were not built-in.

- The Partnership was at first located in the Governor's Office. Child care subsidy had been in the Department of Children and Families (DCF) since the 70s, and Pre-K had been in the Department of Education (DOE) since inception in 1987.

- In 2000, the Partnership was transferred to the Agency for Workforce Innovation (AWI). Child care subsidy and Pre-K were part of the transfer. Child care licensing and state-mandated child care training remained with DCF.

- Legislation in 2000 repealed all descriptions of the existing Pre-K program with the intent of establishing all early care and education programs as "school readiness" programs. Pre-K standards had exceeded Florida's minimum child care licensing standards and had included required quality indicators.

- Under School Readiness, Pre-K programs were mandated to follow the same procedures for eligibility, parent co-payment, and reimbursement limit that define the child care subsidy program.

- Funding for Pre-K had formerly been at significantly higher rates than the funding for child care.

- Most child care is bought with parent fees, supplemented for eligible children by child care subsidy funds. Subsidy payments are based on, and vary with, child enrollment and attendance. Pre-K had been directly funded by the state, based on a full time equivalent (FTE) allocation per child.

- Many Florida school districts have found themselves unable to retain levels of Pre-K programming under the School Readiness terms.

- Some are concerned that segregating children ages 0 to 4 into a separate model of program administration could damage a fragile infrastructure for child care, since care for infants and toddlers is often, in effect, subsidized by parent fees paid for preschool care.

- Early childhood leaders are concerned that segregating children ages 0 to 4 into a separate model of program administration could damage a fragile infrastructure for child care, since care for infants and toddlers is often, in effect, subsidized by parent fees paid for preschool care.

- Care for children from birth to age 4 must not be overlooked in the move to restore Pre-K. Standards may provide impetus to improve the quality of early care and education for all children.

- Many school districts face overcrowded conditions and may not have the space nor the infrastructure to accommodate all 4-year-olds whose families seek access to universal Pre-K. Therefore, partnership with the child care industry will be an important component.

- The citizen's amendment to approve the Universal Pre-K amendment brought Pre-K issues to the attention of state leaders. The Governor and the Secretary of Education circulated information among Partnership participants in support of Pre-K, and have suggested that Pre-K be administratively located in DOE.

- The Partnership has established a Board committee to address possible transition of the Partnership office from AWI to DOE.

Partnerships with Providers and Schools

Facilitators:
Jesse Leinfelder, Ed.D
Associate Director of Professional Development
Mailman Segal Institute
Nova Southeastern University
Fort Lauderdale

Gayle Grimes
Communications Consultant
Voss Associates
Tallahassee

Key Question: What roles in Universal Pre-K should be played by the school system, Head Start, and the child care industry?

- Florida government is being given a mandate to provide universal Pre-K, but it does not currently have the infrastructure to do so. Government needs the support of the child care industry to meet the mandate.

- Vendor agreements or contracts with child care programs might assist the Partnership and Coalitions with supplying needed services for 4-year-olds.

- Community environments should support a robust child care industry able to provide services at the level of quality children deserve. Attention on quality services for 4-year-olds should positively affect the entire industry.

- Head Start funds might be combined with state dollars to expand the number of children served, days and times of service, and/or expand comprehensive services.

- Child care regulations in Florida are far less stringent than in many states, especially for teacher training, group sizes, and staff-child ratios. Quality of regulated child care varies greatly depending on market conditions (what the families purchasing care can afford). The private industry is not standardized; few quality standards have applied to all programs in the market-oriented child care system.

- Contract agreements with child care providers could impose standards of quality. Communities could develop mechanisms for raising the quality of care to establish 'school readiness' providers.

- Several strategies for assuring program quality are in use in Florida and could be used to define parameters for Pre-K contracts. These include:
  - **>** Accreditation. This could be defined as accreditation by NAEYC, or accreditation by one of the eight Florida Gold Seal approved accrediting systems.
  - **>** Quality Rating Systems. Several Florida communities are describing incremental levels of child care quality; indicators such as staff-child ratios and teacher qualifications are rated, and program quality is measured with the nationally-recognized Environment Rating Scales.
  - **>** Child Outcome Measures. Results from the Kindergarten entrance screening could be used to determine PreK contracts.

- Quality assistance programs to increase the level of child care services have been very limited; guidelines could be developed and funds devoted to enhancement efforts. Equitable ways of defining access to enhancement funds will need to be developed.

- Consider "start-up" funds to private providers, as in Georgia, to help jump-start the readiness of child care programs to meet PreK standards.

- Pre-K is often conceptualized as a school program, and one that operates on the school calendar of 6-hour days and 10-month years. Working families have to make other arrangements for the care of their young children after school hours. Equitable ways of defining access to child care financial aid for hours after the adopted Pre-K calendar will need to be developed.

- If Pre-K were to be established solely in school districts without the participation of the child care industry, the exodus of 4-year-olds could diminish the ability of programs to provide quality services for younger children. In the market system, 4-year-olds allow for some profit margin since one adult can care for a relatively large number of them; this helps support the more expensive and more labor-intensive care for infants and toddlers.

- Communities seeking to ensure adequate care for children ages 0 - 3 years should pay close attention to the effects of Pre-K on the larger child care industry.

- Phase-in implementation. Where will Pre-K programs be implemented first? Priority implementation could be related to feeder areas of low-performing elementary schools, or to communities where the Kindergarten entrance screening is identifying children who are not 'school ready.'

See sections on Teacher Qualifications-Staff Development, Ratios, Length of Day/Year, and Program Elements for discussion of varying standards.

Teacher Qualifications and Staff Development

Facilitators:
Mimi Graham, Ph.D
Director
Center for Prevention and Early Intervention Policy
Florida State University
Tallahassee

Beverly Esposito
Vice President of Professional Development
Florida Children's Forum
Tallahassee

Key Question: What staff qualifications should be required for Pre-K? What staff development activities should be made available?

- There is a gap between the staffing standards for public school systems and the licensing requirements for child care programs.

- Staffing standards for the former Florida Pre-K required that each group have, or have close supervision by, a 4-year-degreed certified teacher. Child care regulations require that every staff take the mandated DCF 40-hour training modules within the first year of employment, and that there be one staff with at least a 120-hour Child Development Associate (CDA)-equivalent for every 20 --up to 39-- enrolled children. For child care staff there are no pre-service education or training requirements, and in-service training requirements are only 8 hours annually.

- While Head Start has made the move towards requiring Associate's degrees for lead teachers after relying on CDAs for 25 years, the child care industry has moved up towards expecting, but not requiring, a CDA for lead teachers.

- Florida schools have a documented shortage of Certified teachers, intensifying each year. The child care industry has a documented problem with low wages, making it hard to attract and retain educated staff. Florida child care teachers on average earn less than $7/hour, according to a report from the Partnership.

- Contracting Pre-K into child care programs, where the operating income is solely based on parent fees, and requiring high educational standards for teachers, would require intensive economic support.

- Florida's "Pathways to Professionalism" describes the knowledge and skills needed as staff move from the 40-hours to CDA to an Associate's degree to four-year Teacher Certification. Effective ways of supporting staff moving upwards need to be developed. Training institutions need to collaborate to determine how to best meet the needs of teachers-in-training to prepare them for the jobs they will be expected to do. This should include the child care industry, the central agencies, community colleges, universities, and other agencies that are involved in educating child care teachers.

- Time, scholarships, wage incentives, and support for benefits like medical insurance might effectively be used to improve the quality of the child care workforce.

- Scholarships: the TEACH program, is considered effective at raising qualifications and stemming turnover among child care staff, is seriously under-funded.

- States like North Carolina, the birthplace of TEACH, envisioned annual wage supplements to child care teachers based on educational level attained, to supplement the low wages of the industry.

- Pre-K could be a leavening agent for the child care industry, supporting increased education that will translate into higher staff requirements for child care, and increased ability for staff to demand higher wages in the market-driven child care industry.

- Phase-in implementation. Steps should be identified to increase teacher quality in both Pre-K and child care without pulling the most qualified staff away from child care programs.

Staff-Child Ratios and Length of Day/Year

Facilitators:
Lynn Groves
Director
Florida Success By 6
Tallahassee

Bonnie Baker
Chief Operating Officer
Florida Children's Forum
Tallahassee

Key Question: What staff-child ratios should be required for Universal Pre-K?

- Public attention being focused on class size may stimulate attention to ratio and group size issues in child care. The class size amendment suggests no more than 18 children in Kindergarten classes.

- Former Florida Pre-K standards specified a ratio of 1 to 10 (that is 10 children per 1 adult), and limited the group size to 20 four-year-olds, with two staff: a qualified teacher and an assistant.

- Child care licensing standards allow 20 four-year-olds with one adult.

- State ratios allow 15 three-year-olds per adult, 11 two-year-olds per adult, 6 one-year-olds per adult, and 4 infants per adult. There are no limits on group size, only requiring enough adults to meet the ratios.

- State ratios for 2, 3, 4, and 5 year olds are about twice what is recommended by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) in order to achieve acceptable child outcomes.

- The economics of child care in the market, tied directly to the fees the parents can afford to pay, drives the industry to operate at high ratios of children to adults. A crafty combination of "fixes" is needed to bring the industry to an economic place where better ratios can become the norm.

- The income per child connected with Pre-K contracts with child care providers needs to be high enough to cover increased costs of better ratios.

- Improving the quality of child care from birth to 5 entails economic incentives to allow better ratios for all ages of children.

- It is a painful disconnect to have a Pre-K classroom with a 1-10 ratio (and a well-trained teacher) right next door to a classroom with 15 three-year-olds and 1 adult (with only 40-hours of training).

Comparison Chart of Adult-Child Ratios

Ages in months	Florida	NAEYC	Group size max (NAEYC)	Head Start	
0-12	1:4	1:3 to 4*	8	1:4	8
12-24	1:6	1:3 to 5*	12	1:4	8
24-36	1:11	1:4 to 7*	14	1:4	8
36-48	1:15	1:7 to 10*	20	1:10	17
48-60	1:20	1:8 to 10*	20	1:10	20

*depending on group size. Florida has no group size limitations.

Program and Curriculum Elements

Facilitators:
Alisa Ghazvini, Ph.D
Early Childhood Consultant
Florida Policy Group
Tallahassee

Cathia Darling, Ed.D
Teacher Trainer
Division of Early Childhood
Miami-Dade County Schools

Key Question: What program and curriculum elements should be implemented in Universal Pre-K programs?

Performance Standards

- The Florida Partnership has recently adopted Performance Standards for 3, 4, and 5-year-old children (standards for infants, toddlers, and 2s are under development).

- The Performance Standards describe in illustrative language what children of each age should know and be able to do. They are intended to guide curriculum in programs for young children, to ensure that children are "ready for school" at Kindergarten entry.

- The Standards for 3 and 4-year-olds are cross-referenced with the Head Start Performance Standards. The Standards for 5-year-olds are cross-referenced with the DOE Sunshine State Standards and the School Readiness Statutory Checklist.

- The Performance Standards may guide early care and education programs to provide high-quality experiences for children.

- It is likely that significant teacher training might be needed to help Pre-K administrators and teachers translate the Performance Standards into meaningful program elements.

Curriculum

- Georgia adopted several approved curriculums for use with 4-year-olds in Pre-K classrooms, including High/Scope, Creative Curriculum, Bank Street, Montessori; and allowed for special approval of other curriculum models.

- Former Florida Pre-K standards did not specify a particular set of approved curriculums. Many statewide programs use an eclectic approach to curriculum, using elements of several well-known curriculums to guide their programming.

Accreditation

- Accreditation of child care programs is recognized as a way of assuring quality: a professional body establishes standards, programs conduct self-study to conform to the standards, validators from the accrediting body review programs for compliance. Renewal is generally every 3 years.

- The Florida Gold Seal program identifies the value of program accreditation by connecting higher payment rates and tax exemptions to Gold Seal programs. Eight accrediting systems are approved for Gold Seal status. Legislation specified that Gold Seal accrediting systems be equal to or exceed the standards of NAEYC accreditation.

- The accrediting system of NAEYC is purportedly designed for only the top 10% of child care programs; standards are higher than what is expected to be achieved by 'mainstream' child care. (And only an estimated 7% of centers nationwide have achieved NAEYC accreditation.)

- Accreditation of early care and education programs may be seen as a way of providing guidance for curriculum approaches.

Environment Rating Scales

- Florida Coalitions, under mandate to create plans for child care program quality enhancement, are showing significant interest in use of the Environment Rating Scales.

- The Environment Rating Scales, developed for Infant-Toddler, Early Childhood, School Age, and Family Child Care programs, describe indicators of quality in several component areas.

- Close adherence to the practices described in the nationally-recognized, valid and reliable Scales are correlated with appropriate curriculum practices.

DCF Child Care Program Assessment Tool

- Florida central agencies, since the beginning of subsidized child care in the 70s, have used a check-list tool to monitor program quality and as a guide to curriculum approaches in subcontracting programs.

Comprehensive Services

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Key Question: What provisions should be made for comprehensive services for children and families in Universal Pre-K?

- Ensuring best outcomes for children involves making sure that all domains of development are supported. Attention must be paid to ensure that each child's economic, medical, dental, nutritional, social-emotional, as well as cognitive needs are met, within the context of supporting the child's family.

- There is ample research to demonstrate that the best outcomes for children and families occur when families have access to a wide range of supports that reinforce and support parents in raising their children.

- Head Start programs are recognized for comprehensive program elements that include attention to children's physical and emotional health, parent involvement and skill-building, family support, and developmental screening and assessment.

- Although the School Readiness legislation addresses child health, child screening and assessment, and parent involvement, there are few mechanisms and no incentives for integration of these services for families. Efforts of local Coalitions to integrate services should be built upon.

- Intake/enrollment procedures for Pre-K could include a family needs assessment.

- Pre-K programs might access comprehensive services to meet the identified needs of participating children and families. Referrals to other programs may entail case management and coordination of services.

- Strategies for paying for comprehensive services need to be developed.

- Services provided on-site could be promoted, especially intervention that assists child care staff to deal effectively with children's behavioral issues.

- Disparity between the services that can be accessed by the local school district and what can be accessed by private child care providers needs to be addressed. Child care reimbursement rates (in the current system) do not cover comprehensive services at the program level.

- There may be effective precedent for using federal Head Start dollars for comprehensive services, since the eligible 4-year-old Head Start children would be served by universal Pre-K.

- Developmental screening could be completed for all Pre-K children. The child care industry does not currently have the capacity to do this. Capacity-building and funding for developmental screening and referral needs to be factored in. It may be provided by an agency like FDLRS-Child Find or via intensive training and support to make screening possible throughout the child care industry.

- Readiness legislation established uniform screening at kindergarten entrance. The adopted system does serve the function of screening every child for developmental delay. Referrals for assessment and intervention services are dependent on the capacity of the school district.

Measuring Outcomes

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Key Question: How should the success of Universal Pre-K be measured?

• A variety of research and evaluation activities are needed to determine the effects of Universal Pre-K on children, families, schools, the child care industry, as well as the early care and education system of each community and of the state. Evaluation plans should include child and family outcomes, program performance, and system outcomes.

Tracking System Outcomes

• Third-party independent evaluation of the Pre-K system of service delivery is essential to demonstrating it effectiveness.
• Tracking changes over time requires baseline data on services in the community.
• In addition to tracking long-term outcome of school success, system evaluation projects could also measure and report statewide changes in child care quality, family functioning, public-private partnerships, and children's receipt of health and support services.
• Benchmarks and indicators at the state and local levels can help citizens and community members track results and build support for successful services.

Assessment of Child Outcomes

• The success of "School Readiness" is posited as children's readiness for school.
• Florida School Readiness legislation established uniform screening of all children at Kindergarten entrance, using the Early Screening Inventory and a Work Sampling System checklist.
• The legislation also requires an appropriate pre and post measure of child well-being in 'school readiness' programs. Local Coalitions are struggling to identify appropriate strategies for this purpose.
• A number of screening and assessment tools exist in the commercial market. Coalitions in Florida have not coalesced around use of a particular tool.
  > DCF child care training's 10-hour module on Behavioral Observation and Screening introduces child care staff to the Ages and Stages Questionnaire
  > Dade School Readiness Coalition has embarked on screening all 4-year-olds with the LAP-D.
  > Florida Head Start is piloting extensive use of the Galileo assessment system.
  > In many former Florida Pre-K programs the Child Observation Record (COR) from High/Scope is used.
  > The Creative Curriculum new child assessment system, and the Devereux Early Childhood Assessment (DECA) are being piloted with interest.
• Many early childhood leaders caution against making high-stakes decisions about child outcome on the basis of a single assessment.
• There is value in longitudinal designs that follow children over several years.

Evaluation of Program Quality

Program quality can be thought of as a "proxy" or secondary measure of child well-being. Extensive longitudinal and correlation research has established that high quality programming in early care and education is associated with positive outcomes for children. Several systems are being used in Florida for determining program quality, and could be used to evaluate the quality of PreK programs.

Accreditation

- Accreditation of child care programs is recognized as a way of assuring quality: a professional body establishes standards, programs conduct self-study to conform to the standards, validators from the accrediting body review programs for compliance. Renewal is generally every 3 years.

Environment Rating Scales

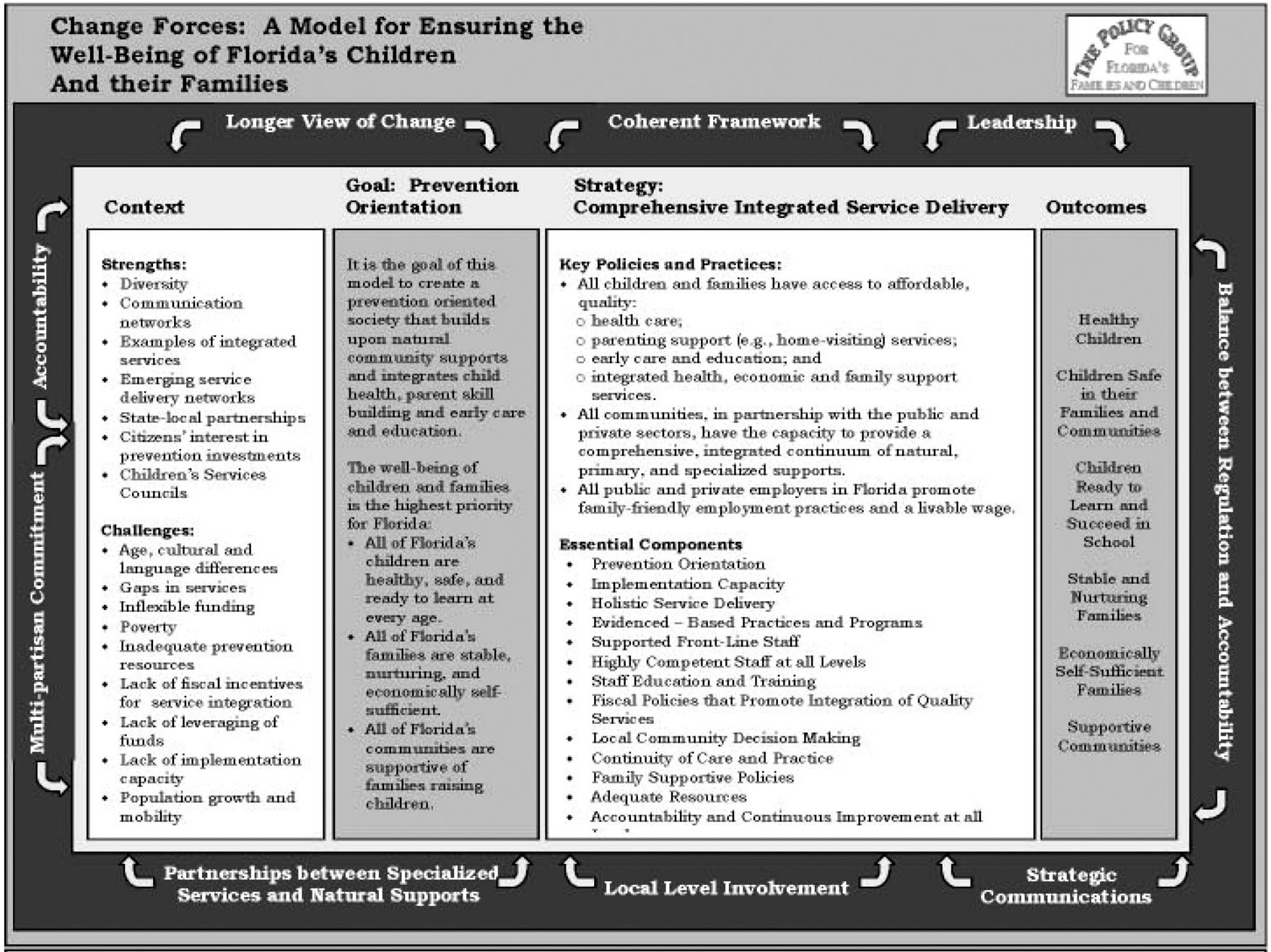
- Florida Coalitions, under mandate to create plans for child care quality enhancement, are showing significant interest in use of the Environment Rating Scales to evaluate program quality.
- The Environment Rating Scales, developed for Infant-Toddler, Early Childhood, School Age, and Family Child Care programs, describe indicators of quality in several component areas, with quality ratings described from Inadequate, to Minimal, to Good, to Excellent.

DCF Child Care Program Assessment Tool

- Florida central agencies, since the beginning of subsidized child care in the 70s, have used a check-list tool to monitor program quality in subcontracting programs.

Florida Universal Pre-K Conference: A Brand New Day

Reference Articles



Our Vision: Together, we will ensure a generation of young people who grow up to be responsible adults — ready, willing and able to contribute to self, to family and to their community.

 October 2002 www.policygroup.org

Georgia Universal PreK: Overview

Summarized from
Universal Prekindergarten in Georgia: A case study on the development and implementation of Georgia's lottery-funded prekindergarten program.
Foundation for Child Development, New York, NY. 212-213-8337

1. **Funding:** Lottery. Georgia created the lottery and the universal Pre-K program at the same time. Pre-K provided a reason for people to support the lottery.

2. **Administration:** Office of School Readiness-OSR, created by committed Governor. Originally in Department of Education (1992-96); new office created to fix problems with overly-bureaucratic DOE that was perceived as hostile to private providers, and for political reasons (non-supportive elected state superintendent of schools).

3. **Clientele:** 60,000 four-year olds (an additional 15,000 in Head Start). Estimated to serve about 75-80% of four year olds in the state. No eligibility restrictions. Universal access based on political assessment that the program would not have survived without middle class voters' support; that programs for low-income are inherently vulnerable. Open enrollment with parent choice of site. School choice politically popular; concern that it may allow savvy middle-class parents to access the best programs at the expense of those who need services the most. Also concern that children attending a private center previously may not have access to that setting for PreK. While program is integrated, studies show no evidence of racial integration of classrooms.

4. **Providers:** Public schools, private schools, private child care centers, community agencies, and Head Start programs. More than half the children are in non-public programs (57%). State pays per-child reimbursement rate. Slightly higher rates for certified teacher. Contracts with private providers include $8,000/class start-up funds for materials/equipment. School system does not have the space. Private child care providers do not want to lose 4 year olds--the most profitable age group, due to lower adult-child ratios than for younger children. Concerns that centers may reduce services for infants-toddlers in order to have the more lucrative Pre-K classes; and that needed infant-toddler child care will concentrate in lower quality centers unable to qualify for Pre-K contracts.

5. **Services:** Focus on academic "school readiness" goals; providers choose from six curriculum models. Comprehensive services no longer part of package. Too expensive, and thought to be not wanted by middle class consumers. Services of a Resource Coordinator provided on limited voluntary basis to 'Category One' at-risk children only. Marketing emphasis identified strategy of focus on academic success to counteract perception that the state is paying for babysitting of middle class children whose parents would have (could have) purchased child care.

6. **Hours/days:** 6.5 hours for 180 days. Any extended day and summer programs have to be paid for by parents, or by child care subsidy-financial aid for eligible children.

7. **Staff qualifications:** four levels accepted. Teacher certification in early childhood; 4-year degree in related field; 2-year vocational or Montessori certificate; or CDA-120 contact hours training. Currently, about 85% have teacher certification, 6% have 2-year, and 7% have CDA. Regulations by 2000-01 to require at least a 2-year degree or a Vocational-Technical certificate in ECE. Reimbursement rates are about $700 per child per year higher for certified teacher than for CDA teacher in a program. Study found significant discrepancies in salaries and qualifications between public school and non-school sites, related to schools' higher wages and benefits. Concerns that school programs "raid" the staff of private programs.

8. **Ratios:** 1 staff per 10 children, maximum group size of 20. GA licensing regulations allow 1 staff for 18 four year olds and group size of 36, 1 staff for 15 three year olds, 1 to 10 for two year olds. Concerns about discrepancies between PreK and state regulations. Concerns about quality of care for 3 year olds, with the far higher number of children per staff allowed than for 4 year olds.

9. **Licensing:** Office of School Readiness is responsible for monitoring and licensing the participating PreK classrooms; state Department of Human Resources licenses and monitors all other child care programs. Policy has critics: duplication of effort, conflict of interest inherent in self-monitoring. PreK sites are exempted from ADA compliance by GA law. Office of School Readiness established voluntary "Standards of Care;" political climate not favorable to NAEYC accreditation (history of antagonism to anti-bias work). OSR consultants monitor and provide technical assistance on 3-4 annual site visits to each program.

10. **Relationship with Head Start:** Somewhat collaborative. Perception that state PreK would undermine Head Start. In some areas, PreK and Head Start funds are blended, allowing for comprehensive services and extended day services.

Critical Success Factors
Georgia Pre-K Program

Political

- Direct continuing involvement of the Governor. Be the champion of the program and adopt a recognizable logo.
- Sufficient funding to properly implement the prekindergarten program. Start with manageable numbers of children.
- Component of a continuum of care; and an economic initiative, i.e., prevention, not remediation.
- Services should be universally accessible - free for all children, regardless of family income.
- Public/private partnership.
- School Choice for parents - children can receive services outside traditional school boundaries.
- Curriculum Choice for parents - based on a variety of nationally recognized programs and/or a curriculum approved by the Office of School Readiness (OSR).
- Service Choice for qualifying families - health, transportation, before and after school care.
- Supplement vs. supplant existing educational programs.

Programmatic

- Emphasis on PRESCHOOL - not day care.
- School readiness objectives, learning goals and standards.
- Educate providers to the fact that the program is not a watered down kindergarten.
- Full 6.5-hour educational program each day; 8 hours for teachers.
- Ratio of 1:10 students; one lead teacher and one assistant teacher.
- Classrooms of 20 students.
- Support services for families - resource coordination.
- Encourage local coordinating councils that foster information and resource sharing.
- Intensive training for teachers, project directors and resource coordinators.
- Parental involvement is important.

Administrative

- Implement a simple financial contracting, payment and reporting system.
- Treat your providers as true professional contractors.
- Develop and agree upon a financial reimbursement model for your providers.
- Develop and agree upon a methodology for allocating and awarding classes.
- Establish consistent minimum salaries for all teachers.
- Effective use of technology - integrated database.
- Positive corporate culture; use the word "customer" daily.
- Hold the line on quality - internally and externally.
- Do not make promises regarding products or deadlines that you cannot deliver.

Other

- Listen to your customers [parents and providers].
- Listen to your critics. They will provide you with valuable insights on how to improve your program.
- Semantics can sometimes be a problem. For instance, OSR only uses the word "appropriate" instead of "developmentally appropriate". A change in wording for Georgia helped with some misconceptions associated with the two phrases.
- Publicize your activities and accomplishments. Develop a marketing plan.
- Engage in meaningful collaboration

TRENDS

Summary of best practices in early development and education of children birth to five years and their families.

A Good Beginning: Social and Emotional Competence for School Readiness

Children who enter kindergarten without adequate social and emotional competence face a cascade of problems throughout their young lives and into adulthood. Social and emotional competence are rooted in secure relationships with attachment to parent(s) or primary caregivers during infancy and the toddler years. Socially competent children are confident, friendly, have good peer relationships or the ability to develop them, and can concentrate on, and persist at, challenging tasks.

What protective factors of children help them succeed in school?

- Child's self-confidence.
- Higher cognitive functioning.
- Easier temperament.
- Higher level of maternal education.
- Emotional support from an alternative caregiver.
- Parents maintaining positive relationships with children.
- Stable, organized, predictable home environment.
- High quality child care at an early age.
- Secure attachment in infancy and an early history of positive functioning.
- Larger number of classroom friends.
- A secure attachment in infancy and an early history of positive functioning.
- Residence with either parents or remarriage after divorce.

What protective factors lead to resiliency for children and families in difficult circumstances?

Research tells us that several major factors appear to preserve or build an individual's resiliency. These elements have strong implications for establishing programs in unstable or hostile environments where a child or adult may be at high risk for victimizations. Parenting and child care programs should explore ways to incorporate the following factors in a program that will strengthen emotional and physical well-being:

- Child's self-confidence.
- Access to culturally appropriate personal support.
- Continuance of traditional rituals, celebrations and practices.
- The opportunity to exercise control over some aspect of their lives.
- Daily routines and common rituals.
- Consistent intervention program structure.
- Interaction with positive role models from the individual's cultural tradition.
- Opportunities to express feelings and sort out thoughts and beliefs.
- Context in which to develop a sense of purpose.

Community Environment

- Opportunities for employment and education, growth and achievement.
- Adult training and educational programs.
- Local community coalitions.
- Absence of lead, and environmental cleanup.

What factors put children and families at risk?

Family Environment

- Exhibiting aggressive, or alternatively aggressive and withdrawn behavior by the time children are 3 years old.
- Low levels of maternal education and maternal depression.
- Lack of consistent parenting practices - harsh or inconsistent discipline, lack of emotional interaction between the parent and child, lack of parental supervision.
- Children exposed to caregivers low in nurturing and high in criticism.
- Difficulty in peer and sibling relationships and play behavior.
- Quality of parent-child interaction and attachment.
- Difficult temperament, e.g., high activity level, inflexibility, distractibility, low attention to tasks.
- Communication problems (speech, hearing, cognition) and emotional/behavioral difficulties in young children.

School Environment

- Repeating the first grade.
- Pattern of absenteeism from child care.
- Children exposed to caregivers low in nurturing and high in criticism.
- Difficulty in peer and sibling relationships and play behavior.
- When cognitive skills are affected by injury or illness such as head injury, chronic illness, epilepsy, severe malnutrition and prematurity, behavior and social success in early school are affected.
- Communication problems (speech, hearing, cognition) and emotional/behavioral difficulties in young children.
- Poor verbal skills, negative attitudes to school, lowered self-expectations and behavioral difficulties.

Community Environment

- Lack of access to quality health care and health insurance.
- Lack of quality early care and education programs.
- Lower quality schools.
- Lack of access to transportation.
- Poor housing conditions.
- Lack of community awareness of need for early intervention.
- Daily routines and common rituals.
- Consistent intervention program structure.

What have we learned about how to support children's social and emotional competence?

Interventions can be designed at universal, selective (targeted) or indicated levels, with enormous social and ethical differences and policy implications (Gordon 1983). Bronfenbrenner (1974) suggests these are the levels at which interventions operate within the "ecology of childhood." This literature review focuses on interventions directed toward groups defined by risk; therefore, all noted interventions operate at the selective (targeted) level. The interventions reviewed were designed to address a specific primary risk factor, with some interventions also considering related or multiple risk factors.

- Use targeted and/or selective interventions for groups of children at risk for difficulties in adapting to school. For example, prior to kindergarten entrance, it may be useful to identify children prone to maladaptive behavioral dispositions, e.g., aggression, and involve them in targeted interventions designed to promote prosocial, adaptive behaviors as pursuing positive contacts with peers.

- Universal interventions to help all families provide children with important formative experiences in school settings. For example, arranging for children to attend pre-school and to develop neighborhood friendships with peers before entering elementary school. In planning peer composition of new classrooms, school administrators might consider grouping children so as to maximize contact with prior friends (Rutter, 1990).

- Policy changes facilitate the integration of the medical and educational systems to ensure children's social and emotional readiness for school.

- Parents and consistent caregivers play a protective role in developing the social and emotional competence in children.

- Consistent and positive relationships with parents, peers and teachers that are established early play an important role in social competence and school success.

- Select multiple interventions and strategies that complement one another and reflect the community and families.

- Policymakers, practitioners and researchers must work together to improve delivery of services and improve the flow of knowledge between agencies and disciplines.

- The public and private sectors must work together to develop standards for quality care and models of early intervention for school success.

- Comprehensive assessment and treatment practices can only be achieved through nonfragmented services.

What do we know about social and emotional school readiness?

- Social and emotional competence is central to success in school.
- Social and emotional school readiness is related to later school and vocational success.
- Children's early relationships are the foundation for social and emotional competence in early childhood.
- Emotional and social competency can be defined and measured.
- Cultural issues are of prime importance, and family background must be respected in the development of research and policy.
- Both risk and protective factors must be identified and their relative significance established to shape and reshape researched-based intervention programs.

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Getting Children Ready For School And Schools Ready For Children

Many communities have begun to develop programs and services that enhance school readiness. This brief considers not only child readiness but also the factors of readiness related to the child's family, early care and education, schools and communities.

How do we define school readiness?

According to National Educational Goals Panel (NEGP), the definition of readiness includes the physical, social and emotional well-being and intellectual development of children. These are five dimensions of readiness:

- **Physical well-being and motor development.** This includes health, growth, large and small motor skills and the conditions before, at and after birth, such as exposure to toxic substances.
- **Social and emotional development.** Social development is a child's ability to interact socially and to exhibit positive social skills with peers and adults. Emotional development is how a child feels about him/herself and the ability to understand the emotions of others
- **Approaches to learning.** This is demonstrated by children in how they use skills, knowledge and capacities. Critical components are curiosity, enthusiasm and ability to stay with a task. Temperament and culture.
- **Language development.** Children's verbal and emerging literacy, including print awareness, story sense and the writing process.
- **Cognition and general knowledge.** Children have the ability to understand similarities, differences and associations from direct experiences with objects, peoples and events. They also can understand and recognize shapes, match certain sounds to letters and number concepts, e.g., counting with objects and one-to-one correspondence.

What are the characteristics of children ready for school?

- Confident.
- Cooperative.
- Curious.
- Intentional, able to complete tasks on time.
- Self-control, able to monitor one's own behavior.
- Capacity to communicate.
- Able to concentrate.
- Accepts school routines and curriculum.
- Willingness to engage in tasks and master skills.
- Willingness to accept school rules and authority.
- Ability to work alone and in groups.
- Ability to attend to detail and to the quality of one's work.

What are the characteristics of ready schools?

- Smooth transitions between home and school that reflect respect and sensitivity to families, culture and language.
- Continuity between early care and education programs and elementary schools.
- Committed to the success of every child, teacher and every adult who interacts with children during the school day.
- Researched-based approaches that raise achievement and are appropriate for children.
- Responsibility for results.
- Learning communities that alter practices and programs if they do not benefit children.
- Strong leadership and resources to follow through on goals, visibility and accessibility.

What should be the goal of measuring school readiness in children?

NEGP recommends that assessment should be age and linguistically appropriate and should include multiple sources of information from parents and teachers as well as direct assessment of children.

Assessment of children for school readiness should:

- Shape instruction by identifying what they know and what they need more help with.
- Identify children who may need health or other special services.
- Examine trends and evaluate programs services to inform collective decisions.
- Evaluate the academic accomplishment to hold individual students, teachers and school accountable for desired learning outcomes.

What are the characteristics of appropriate school readiness assessment?

- Benefit children and the adults who work with children.
- Used for the purpose for which they are designed.
- Valid and reliable.
- Age appropriate, using naturalistic observations to collect information as children interact in "real life" situations.
- Holistic, collecting information on all developmental domains (physical, social, emotional and cognitive).
- Linguistically and culturally appropriate.
- Collect information through a variety of processes and multiple sources (collection of children's work, observations of children, interviews with children, parent reports, etc.)
- Guide instruction not to determine children's placement in school.
  (Saluja, G., Scott-Little, C., Clifford, R.M, (in press)

What investments can communities make for school readiness?

Communities that want school readiness as a priority recognize the extensive body of research on child development that contributes to the framework for investment. Based on the meticulously evaluated programs or which longitudinal data is available, are components of promoting school readiness.

Child Health:

Physical and mental health are critical elements to school readiness and school success. Children and families must have access to:

- Quality health care.
- Pediatric monitoring.
- Appropriate referrals and follow-ups.
- Home visits as appropriate and on a voluntary basis.
- Immunizations.

Children need:

- Appropriate nutrition.
- Safe from unintentional injury.
- Healthy physical and mental health of parents and families.

Family Factors:

Family environment shapes children's early development;

- Parent and child bonding and attachment and positive and sustaining parenting practices.
- Almost everything children learn early comes from their families
- Parents are essential to child development: they design the home environment; they organize the child's experiences, and they are the child's primary source of information and support.
- A child's parents are the first and most important teachers she or he will have.
- To foster the desire to learn parents should:
    - Display confidence in their child's ability.
    - Value education.
    - Encourage natural curiosity and stimulate it when they can.
    - Provide variety of new experiences.
    - Set goals for their child that are challenging but obtainable.
    - Help their child realize that mistakes are part of learning.
    - Teach by example.
    - Promote language and bonding by reading to their children, beginning from birth.

Early Care and Education:

Quality early care and education programs enhance children's cognitive, social and emotional development. Characteristics of high quality environments:

- Promote and support all developmental domains.
- Higher standard of health and safety practices.
- Adults that support and provide stimulating environments.
- Age-appropriate practices in curriculum and assessment and inclusive of culture and language.
- Trained staff are adequately compensated
- Responsive environments sensitive to the child as an individual and as part of the group.
- Lower staff-child ratios.
- Small group size.
- Family-focused programs where parent relationships are important.

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The Link Between Cost, Quality and Compensation in Child Care

Longitudinal research has demonstrated the healthy growth and development of young children depends on caring relationships with competent individuals in a stable environment. With a growing number of women entering the workforce, the environment that often provides these relationships is a child care setting. Recent estimates place almost 13 million preschool children in some type of child care setting on a regular basis (West, Wright, & Hauskin, 1995). The experiences these children have in the child care setting will substantially impact their long term physical, emotional, social and cognitive development, yet the majority of this care is provided by an unstable workforce often compensated at poverty-level wages with little or no health benefits. The high turnover rate, poor wages, lack of benefits and public perception that "anyone can provide care" (Ripple, 2000) has led to a dearth of quality, affordable child care. Although children from all socioeconomic levels are affected by this quality crisis, poor children who have the greatest need and would benefit most from a quality early care and education setting stand to be the most severely affected.

Key Findings

- Annual job turnover rates range between 25 and 50% among child care workers.
- 44% of child care workers earn less than $8.50 per hour, placing them at the low end of the wage range for all occupations. The average hourly wage for a preschool teacher in the State of Florida is $7.96 and a child care worker is $6.43.
- Only 18% of child care centers offer fully paid health coverage to teaching staff.
- The CQO (Cost, Quality & Outcome) study (1995) found that only 36% of teachers had a bachelor's degree or higher. Only 33% of infant child care providers had any specialized training in child development and only 18% had a bachelor's degree or higher.
- Approximately 59% of children from low-income homes attend programs that are unlikely to provide the full range of child development, health, and parent services needed to support their school readiness.
- A 1995 survey of child care centers in four states revealed that only 8% of infant classrooms and 24% of preschool classrooms were of good or excellent quality.

What "quality" child care means to young children

- Children in higher quality child care as preschoolers are more socially competent in elementary school, are more empathetic and better liked by their peers (Vandell, Henderson, & Wilson, 1988).
- Toddlers enrolled in high quality care engage in more pretend play and have more positive affect with their peers when they are pre-school age and demonstrate higher school adjustment ratings as kindergartners (Howes, 1990).
- Children who attend higher quality child care have better language and math skills from the pre-school years into elementary school.
- Better child care quality is more strongly related to better math skills and fewer problem behaviors from the preschool years through second grade for children whose mothers have less education.

The adult-child ratio is one predictor of quality in center and family child care.

Family environment shapes children's early development;

- In smaller groups, adults spend more time interacting with children and less time simply watching them
- Children in smaller groups are more verbal, more involved in activities, less aggressive, and make the greatest gains in standardized tests of learning and vocabulary (Ruopp, Travers, Glantz, & Coelen, 1977).
- Children in groups with better care giving and developmentally appropriate activities show greater competence with their peers (Howes, Phillips, & Whitebook, 1992).
- Infants and toddlers are more likely to imitate adult gestures and speech -- a critical mechanism for learning -- when there are fewer children per adult (Francis & Self, 1982).
- Child language and play behaviors are positively related to lower ratios of children to adults. Children in centers with more than three children per adult experienced the most crying and adult restriction (Howes & Rubenstein, 1985).

Staff qualifications

- Child-related training is linked to more social interaction between the caregiver and children, more cooperation and task persistence among children, and less time by children uninvolved in activities (Ruopp, Travers, Glantz & Coelen, 1979).
- When caregivers have a higher level of child-related training and formal training children score better on tests of cognitive and social competence.
- Teacher preparation (both pre-service and in-service) significantly predicts program quality, and better program quality is linked with more positive-child outcomes, especially in terms of language and representational skills-critical areas for school success.
- Overall education levels of caregivers also appear to positively affect outcomes for children (Berk, 1985; Whitebook, Howes, Phillips, 1989).
- Caregivers with more training have less authoritarian childrearing styles and slightly more knowledge about child development. Teachers with more training received more positive ratings in observations and are less punitive to and detached from children (Arnett, 1989).

Linking quality care to cost of services

- The 1999 Cost, Quality and Outcomes Study demonstrated the link between the cost of services and the quality of care received by children.
- Research indicates teacher compensation is closely linked to the quality of services in child care.
- Teacher compensation issues are important to address in any initiatives for improvement in child care quality. Teacher salaries are so low that trained teachers leave the early childhood field in great numbers, resulting in overall lower levels of teacher qualifications and child care quality.
- Child care programs are much more successful at retaining staff when they model their wage scales after the salaries of workers in other fields who have comparable levels of education and training.
- "Teachers can't afford to stay. Parents can't afford to pay. There's got to be a better way" (Slogan from the Center for the Child Care Workforce).

Potential Strategies for Change

- Child care subsidies should be redesigned to offer incentives for providing high quality care. These subsidies should ensure that efforts are not only targeted to improving the quality of services but providing higher compensation for teachers.
- Strengthen standards and regulations for child care programs.
- Require initial and ongoing training for staff working in child care programs.
- Find ways to recruit and retain more highly educated and skilled staff.
- Inform parents about the importance of quality child care and its effects on children.
- Identify ways to support the costs of higher quality child care.
- Increase public funds for early childhood programs that include targeted compensation initiatives.
- Raise the minimum wage for child-care workers and improve benefits.
- Educate the public and mobilize powerful constituencies including the media, the business community, policy-makers and the aging baby boomer generation.
- Link child- and elder-care quality campaigns.
- Unionize/organize the early childhood workforce.

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Preschool for All
Investing In a Productive and Just Society

A Statement by the Research and Policy Committee of the Committee for Economic Development (excerpts)
2002
New York, NY and Washington, DC
www.ced.org

Summary

The Committee for Economic Development (CED) calls on the federal and state governments to undertake a new national compact to make early education available to all children age 3 and over. To ensure that all children have the opportunity to enter school ready to learn, the nation needs to reform its current haphazard, piecemeal, and under-funded approach to early learning by linking programs and providers into coherent state-based systems. The goal should be universal access to free, high-quality prekindergarten classes, offered by a variety of providers, for all children whose parents want them to participate.

CED believes that universal access will be accomplished in the most timely and equitable way through a strong federal/state partnership. States must be responsible for (1) expanding preschool opportunities, (2) ensuring that the necessary teachers and facilities are available, and (3) integrating their diverse array of preschool providers and programs into coherent systems that meet the educational needs of young children while also addressing child care needs of working parents. The federal government should provide incentives for and assistance to states constructing high-quality early learning systems by (1) creating a new federal-to-state grant program to underwrite part of the cost of providing universal access to prekindergarten, (2) helping states build the infrastructure needed to extend access to all children, and (3) certifying acceptable state standards for early education.

For too long the United States has paid lip service to the importance of preschool opportunities that prepare children for school without undertaking the level of investment needed to turn promise into reality. For the sake of both the children and of our society, it is time to make good on the commitment to provide early learning opportunities for all. We call on federal and state policy makers to implement the steps outlined here, and we support the additional public investments necessary to build and maintain universal prekindergarten programs.

Principles

CED's vision of universal preschool calls on states to play the central role in building universal prekindergarten systems. We see the federal government as catalyzing state system-building through significant subsidies tied to the development of state strategic plans and timetables and dependent on holding state and preschool services to acceptable standards. States should be free to choose their own approach to the development of universal prekindergarten so long as the approach is consistent with the following five principles.

(1) Access. Children age 3 and up whose parents want them to enroll should have access to center-based preschool programs that meet recognized standards for fostering education and school readiness along with social and physical development in a safe environment. We believe a minimum goal should be free part-day (4-6 hours), school-year long prekindergarten programs for all such children, just as older children are provided publicly-funded elementary and secondary education. The federal government, which already is and should continue to be a major source of early education funding, should ensure that basic standards of program quality are in place by creating an independent body to review state-developed and other standards for early education and certify acceptable ones.

(2) Delivery. Preschool education consistent with recognized standards should be obtainable from a variety of providers, with parents choosing the setting most appropriate for their child's and family's needs. A diverse array of providers (e.g., public preschools, Head Start, nonprofit and profit-making child care centers) already enroll many young children. It makes sense to take advantage of this existing infrastructure by offering current providers the opportunity and means to upgrade their services to prekindergarten standards while allowing parents to continue selecting the setting they prefer for their children. Such arrangements are especially important for working parents, who need access to providers who build early education into full-day, year-round programs. Policy makers should encourage providers to integrate prekindergarten and child care by, for example, eliminating incompatible rules that create barriers to seamless provision of education and child care services. Policy makers should also structure public subsidy programs to offer incentives to providers to supply higher quality child care.

(3) Financing. While states should be responsible for ensuring universal access to prekindergarten and tying diverse providers into coherent systems of early education, the federal and state governments should share responsibility for financing early learning. To encourage equitable access across the nation, the federal government should provide funding sufficient to cover children from lower-income families by creating a new federal-to-state grant program and should also provide states with financial assistance to help develop the infrastructure needed for universal access. States should ensure that places are available in approved preschool programs for all children age 3 and up whose families want them to attend.

Most states will not be able to implement universal free prekindergarten overnight, and federal funding should begin in the early stages of system-building. But even initial federal funding should be contingent on states submitting plans describing a strategy and timetable for accomplishing the goal of providing free universal access to preschool for all. While eventually states should be responsible for the costs of preschool for all children not covered by federal support, as an interim step states could, by using income-based fee schedules, share these costs with families.

(4) Infrastructure, quality improvement, and oversight. In addition to subsidizing direct preschool costs, the federal and state governments should make resources available to improve staff and facilities and provide technical assistance and monitoring. Universal, high-quality preschool will require many new facilities and qualified teachers. Without explicit attention from policy makers, shortages of teachers and classrooms will hamper the expansion of preschool programs. Providers wishing to upgrade their standards will need help with costs that they may not be able to cover from routine operating income. In addition, states must monitor preschool systems that utilize diverse providers in order to identify and assist those that are not meeting established standards.

(5) Data and research. The federal and state governments should improve data collection to ensure that comparable and reliable information is available on access, costs, and outcomes and should support research to expand our knowledge about the most effective characteristics of early learning programs. The fragmented nature of early care and education in the United States is reflected in data systems that present only a partial picture of current early learning activities. Instead of piecemeal reporting approaches, federal and state policy makers must develop unified data collection systems capable of providing comprehensive information on children's participation in early education and related services. Moreover, while research has already provided important insights into the learning capabilities of young children and raised critical questions about the adequacy of existing programs, much remains to be learned about which policies and practices will most effectively and efficiently support early learning.

Moving beyond today's fragmented and inadequate array of early education offerings to a high quality preschool system that meets the needs of all young children will clearly take time. Achieving this goal will also take improved knowledge about how to make the most of young children's capacities to learn. But we already know more than enough to begin making meaningful progress now toward the goal of early learning opportunities for all. It is time to turn this knowledge into action.

Education for Four-Year-Olds State Initiatives

James J. Gallagher
Jenna R. Clayton
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Technical Report #2 Executive Summary

ONE OF THE MAJOR EDUCATIONAL POLICY SHIFTS in recent years has been the establishment of state funded prekindergarten programs in a number of states. Such a move seems to be driven, in part, by:
• evidence that many students are failing in the early grades, particularly children considered "at risk,"
• an increasing number of mothers in the workforce,
• welfare reform policies that require mothers to work and, therefore, find child care, and
• evidence of the importance of early childhood to later development.

The research questions posed in the present study were: How did the states manage this distinctive shift in educational policy to prekindergarten? What were the major facilitators and major barriers to be overcome, and the particular strategies that appeared to be useful in achieving this result? It was noted that such a policy change was being accomplished despite the known difficulty of instituting change in bureaucratic systems and the hidden power of the status quo in resisting change. Five states were chosen (Georgia, Illinois, New York, South Carolina, and Texas) on the basis of previous surveys that determined that these states were making substantial progress in establishing a prekindergarten program in their state. The objective of this study was to discover the forces at work in each state by conducting structured interviews of knowledgeable people in each of the five states and by examining documents provided by them. The people interviewed represented early childhood, Head Start, child care, the political scene, and others who were seen as relevant to the educational policy in that particular state.

The interviewees were provided the questions they would be asked that essentially inquired into their views and experiences related to facilitators and barriers to the state-funded program for prekindergarten. They were asked to describe how the policy had been established and how it was being implemented. A category system was designed, based on previous work on policy barriers, which allowed for the coding of the interviews into nine separate categories (Institutional, Individual, Groups, Economic, Political, Geographic, Academic, Media, and Resources). Each category was capable of being either a facilitator or a barrier (see pp. 13-14). Each passage, identified as a facilitator or a barrier, was coded by three judges. Two of the three judges had to agree for the coding to be accepted. The individual case studies and analyses yielded the following results for each of the states.

GEORGIA
In 1992, then Governor Zell Miller decided that prekindergarten was something that Georgia needed and he provided the political leadership to make a program possible. The program began as a pilot and served 750 'at-risk' students. In school year 1995-1996 with the growing income from the newly passed lottery, **2 EDUCATION FOR FOUR-YEAR-OLDS:** STATE Initiatives full-day universal program for all four-year-olds (all four-year-olds that wished to participate were entitled to the program) was begun. In 1996 Miller moved the program from the Department of Education into a separate unit, the Office of School Readiness, which reported directly to him. During the school year 1999-2000, this voluntary state prekindergarten program spent over $220 million and served about 62,500 (63%) students while Head Start served another 10,000 children. Using either program, a total of about 73% of all four-year-old children in Georgia were served. The Georgia program required a teacher child ratio of 1:10 and a maximum class size of 20 children. The program must operate at least 6 hours per day. The Office of School Readiness contracts with public schools, Head Starts, and private providers to deliver the services.

The prekindergarten program was facilitated because of the commitment of former Governor Zell Miller and the availability of a designated funding source (the lottery) which did not dilute existing funds from other state programs. The establishment of Coordinating Councils, which required the commitment of many agencies, also promoted a smooth start.
A major barrier appeared to be that the program was started so fast that the necessary collaboration and initial concerns of child care and Head Start were overlooked. These concerns now have to be accommodated in the implementation phase.

ILLINOIS

This program began fifteen years ago through the strong initiation of a program of educational reform by the State Board of Education, a variety of influential advocacy groups and by friends in the state legislature. The target population was and remains children identified as "at risk" for academic failure through a screening process, or children for whom English is a second language.

The prekindergarten program has grown from $3 million to $200 million dollars and has units in every county in the state. The state funds full-day and half-day programs; most are half-day programs. The staff-child ratio may not exceed 1:10 with a maximum of 20 children in each classroom. During school year 1999-2000, it served almost 55,000 children (15% of the statewide population of three and four-year-olds although there are more four-year olds served in the program). Statewide about 22% of four-year-olds are served, with Head Start serving another 40,000 children. Although still not part of the regular school budget (it operated as a grant program) it seemed to be well established. Localities must receive funds through the public schools, but they may subcontract with Head Start and child care centers to provide the services.

The prekindergarten programs appeared to be facilitated by gradual implementation and strong
public support. There were many advocacy voices for this program from a variety of groups in the private and professional sectors of Illinois. From the very beginning of the program, there was an emphasis on program quality that reassured the public that their money was being well spent.

Major barriers appeared to be a limited amount of collaboration between the schools and other agencies in many districts. Lack of space, transportation, and qualified teachers remained a problem although, ironically, such deficits encouraged collaboration.

NEW YORK

New York has had an Experimental prekindergarten program in place for 35 years and this program laid the groundwork for the Universal Prekindergarten program (UPK). UPK started in 1997 with a year of planning. The first year of implementation, 1998-1999, the program served 68 low-income districts with all children within these districts being eligible to attend this half-day program. Universal Prekindergarten had a budget of $100 million for school year 1999-2000 and served 99 districts including the five largest districts in the state. Almost 35,000 (13% of the four-year-olds in the state) children were served in 1999-2000 with priority given to economically disadvantaged children within these districts. A budget of $225 million was approved for this half-day program in2000-2001. The money is awarded to the public schools, which must then subcontract at least 10% of their funds to outside agencies. Public schools, Head Start and private providers may offer programs. There has been a strong emphasis on quality with the requirement that all lead teachers be certified by school year 2001-2002. There is no minimum class size, but the maximum is 20. A major facilitator for the Universal Prekindergarten program was the legislation that mandated at least 10% of prekindergarten funds are set aside for other agencies to participate. A driving force for the new program (buried in a large education reform package-the LADDER proposal) was Speaker of the Assembly, Sheldon Silver, with the support of many advocacy and professional groups.

A strong curriculum was made available to local districts as well as quality controls that were designed to enhance child development. Although promoted as a universal program, open to all, it has a five-year phase-in and there remain concerns about whether there will be enough money appropriated for total implementation. Some schools remain doubtful of the state's intent and their concerns have been magnified by the legislature's penchant for late budgets, often not passed until the summer. Lack of trained personnel, transportation and half-day programs are problems that require other support funds.

SOUTH CAROLINA

The strong leadership of former Governor Richard Riley facilitated the prekindergarten program in South Carolina. He began the program as part of a package of education reform. The fact that many students in South Carolina were performing poorly on standardized tests and that prekindergarten received strong support from minority groups were seen as strong catalysts for the program.

The prekindergarten program began as part of the Education Improvement Act in 1984 with the passage of an additional one-cent sales tax. The program served 'at-risk' four-year-olds who are defined as "children with potential academic deficiencies or children for whom English is a second language." A school district may subcontract with outside agencies to provide prekindergarten services. Only certified teachers may teach in the program regardless of what setting is being

used. The program requires two and a half hours per day-five days per week. Half day programs are not practical in some localities so they often use an assortment of funding sources and collaboration to provide full-day programs. Every school district was required to have at least one program, and about 15,400 children were served in the 1999-2000 school year. This was about 30% of the four-year-olds in the state. At the same time the state appropriated $23.6 million for this program with the participating localities spending additional amounts.
The program has faced political problems, depending upon which party was in power, in addition to financial costs and lack of resources, such as trained personnel. There were also moral issues raised by conservative voices, which carry considerable weight in South Carolina. They often questioned whether such early childhood programs were undermining the family by encouraging women to work outside the home.

TEXAS
The prekindergarten program in Texas began in the fall of 1985. It served 'at-risk' (children unable to speak or understand English, educationally disadvantaged, or homeless) children in almost every locality of Texas. If a school district identified at least 15 eligible four-year-olds, it must offer a prekindergarten program. The program had gradually grown over the years to a $171.9 million program, serving 142,000 children or about 22% of the four-year-olds in the state.
Currently the state funds half-day programs, but an additional $200 million was provided by the state legislature in 1999 to transform these programs into full-day programs. This money is to be used during the 1999-2001 school years. The Texas Education Agency administers the prekindergarten program and local school districts receive the funds. They may subcontract with community agencies for prekindergarten services. There are voluntary curriculum standards but a certified teacher must be in each classroom. Because prekindergarten was removed from the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (a means used by the Texas Education Agency for determining accountability/ requirement) there is neither a state-approved teacher child ratio nor a maximum class size. The prekindergarten program was facilitated because the program was a part of a larger educational reform movement inspired by a citizen's commission headed by Ross Perot. The impetus for the program was the large number of children failing in the early grades. A new initiative pushed by Governor Bush, 'every child reading on grade level by the third grade,' has increased interest and support for the prekindergarten program. The major barriers are lack of facilities and personnel and also a lack of administrative support as evidenced by a one-person Department of Early Childhood Education and a lack of regular early childhood education staff in the important Regional Resources Centers. There is also a question about how extensive the collaboration is between community agencies and the education programs.

FACILITATORS & BARRIERS
Using the category system employed in this study, all of the states seemed to have high percentages of facilitators in the **institutional, individual,** and **political** areas. The wide variety of changes in the systems of education and child care resulted in a high percentage of responses in the **institutional** category. Organizational shifts for administrative purposes, establishing local coordinating councils, creating new personnel preparation programs, and so on, all fell in this category. The **individual** category was also high in most states, which reflected the powerful influence of key persons in the state, both political and professional leaders, necessary to move the program along.

Political responses reflected the important role played by the political process in bringing about these policy changes. The barriers that were mentioned most frequently by most states fell into the **institutional, resources** and **economic** categories. The many responses in the **institutional** category reflected the continued need to establish collaboration between agencies and the lack of data systems, communication networks, and other support system features that were needed for a complete prekindergarten program.

The lack of **resources** to properly run a prekindergarten program was felt by all of the states and focused on space, transportation, and personnel needs. Even when the program was limited to 'at risk' students there were major shortages to meet all of these needs. As states move to a universal program such needs will multiply, again requiring a consistent strategy as to how to meet these needs on a continuing basis.

Economics was the third category that received many comments. The major concern was how to pay for this program. At the universal level it is the equivalent of adding another year to the budget of the public schools, which is no small matter. Aside from Georgia's use of the lottery, there were few insights as to how the program was going to be financed aside from gradually increasing this budget year-by-year. A phase-in strategy is almost sure to be used by most states to allow for gradual increases in the budget to pay the bill for this new prekindergarten program.

COMMON THEMES

The investigators found several common elements across all five states. These included, (1) the importance of political leadership, (2) the goal of trying to reduce school failure in the early grades, (3) the importance of making this program a piece of a larger educational reform package, (4) the cooperation between professional and political leaders, and (5) the increase of mothers in the workforce putting pressure on decision makers for some type of action.

Major differences between the states were found in: (1) the manner of financing the program, (2) gradual versus sudden implementation, (3) how the program was administered and the degree of support services provided to back-up the program.

LESSONS LEARNED

Among the suggestions provided by the investigators to other states that might be thinking about state action for prekindergartens or expanding existing programs, the five most important were:

- link the program with other educational reform packages,
- target children who are not developing in ways that could make likely their successful entry to school ('at-risk' children),
- seek political leadership and support,
- establish a funding source, if possible, one that does not take away from other state services, and
- encourage collaboration among the many early childhood stakeholders within the state.

Other suggestions were: develop strategies for transportation, build a data system to collect needed information, and stress program quality such as using certified personnel and well developed curriculum.

CHANGE THEORY

What do we know about change and how it can be accomplished in this policy arena? Prekindergarten represents such a sea change in American education that the nature of change itself needs to be considered. Table 1 presents the eight basic lessons of a new paradigm change proposed by Fullan (1993). Some of these lessons seem particularly relevant to the present study. We are particularly interested in Lesson 2, Change is a journey, not a blueprint (change is non-linear, loaded with uncertainty and excitement, and sometimes perverse);

The Eight Basic Lessons of the New Paradigm Change

Lesson One: You can't mandate what matters.

Lesson Two: Change is a journey not a blueprint (change is non-linear, loaded with uncertainty and excitement, and sometimes perverse).

Lesson Three: Problems are our friends.

Lesson Four: Vision and strategic planning come later.

Lesson Five: Individualism and collectivism must have equal power.

Lesson Six: Neither centralization nor decentralization works (top-down and bottom-up strategies are necessary).

Lesson Seven: Connection with the wider environment is critical for success (the best organizations learn externally as well as internally).

Lesson Eight: Every person is a change agent.

Source:

Fullan, M. (1993). Change forces. New York: The Palmer Press.

Early Care for Infants and Toddlers:

Examining the Broader Impacts of Universal Prekindergarten

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Foreword

In 1997, New York State became the second state in the nation after Georgia to enact universal prekindergarten (UPK) legislation, aimed at the provision of voluntary educational services to all four-year-old children. Although the development of UPK is part of an overall effort to strengthen the state's educational system and prepare children for success in kindergarten, relatively little attention has been given to the role UPK might play in the child care arena, or to its overall impacts on early care and education as a system of supports for children and families. Of particular interest has been the requirement that school districts contract out a minimum of 10% of their UPK funds to community-based providers such as child care centers, nursery schools, private schools, preschool special educational programs, and other community-based programs for the provision of services. What does it mean for these providers when they receive a substantial influx of state dollars into their programs? Does this benefit the entire system of early care and education, or is there potential for harm? Is there increased competition for four-year-olds? Are there any impacts on services to infants and toddlers?

This research was undertaken as part of a series of studies on the implementation of UPK conducted by the Cornell Early Childhood Program. These include surveys to UPK coordinators, analysis of final report data submitted to the State Education Department, and extensive interviews with school administrators, UPK coordinators, advisory board members, center directors, and teachers in several case study districts. In this report, we hear the perspective of child care resource and referral agencies-those individuals best-suited for providing us with the larger picture of what is happening in communities. The directors and staff who completed the surveys and interviews of this study are the ones who assess community needs for early care and educational services, who monitor services, who are actively involved in service planning, and who keep in touch with a broad range of families and providers on a daily basis. We are grateful to add another voice to our understanding of UPK. Because New York is the second state and the first of the ten largest states to introduce UPK, a study of the broader impacts of UPK represents an unprecedented opportunity to inform early care and education policy and practice nationwide. With its diversity, New York's program offers insight into the challenges involved with designing early care and education systems both in the country's largest and most concentrated city and in rural areas. This report complements two other reports on UPK completed by the Cornell Early Childhood Program1. These are:

- *Promising Practices: New York State Universal Prekindergarten*
- *Collaborating for Kids: New York State Universal Prekindergarten 1999-2000*

Executive Summary

In 1997, New York State passed legislation implementing Universal Prekindergarten (UPK), a new educational program with the goal of providing a voluntary, high-quality preschool experience to all four-year-old children and improving school readiness. To date, the program has served over 90,000 children in almost 200 school districts. Early Care for Infants and Toddlers presents the findings from a study of the impacts of UPK on community-based services to infants, toddlers, and preschoolers. Of interest in this study were the possible unanticipated consequences of UPK, especially those that could be detrimental to the overall system of early care for infants and toddlers.

Through surveys and telephone interviews completed by child care resource and referral (CCR&R) agency directors and staff throughout the state, along with supplemental information from surveys conducted with district UPK coordinators, much has been learned about the implementation of UPK in local school districts and communities. The findings provide insight in a number of areas. These include the level and types of CCR&R involvement with the UPK program, the magnitude of potential UPK impact on infants and toddlers, the reasons why some child care centers are receiving UPK funds while others are not, the perceived impacts on services to infants and toddlers, competition for four-year-olds, and a number of community concerns as well as many beneficial outcomes that UPK has had on children, child care programming, teachers, and families.

This report presents findings in several key areas and provides recommendations to district planners, child care resource and referral agencies, and others involved in UPK regarding ways to further enhance community planning and program delivery. The research is part of a larger, comprehensive study currently underway that also includes surveys to district UPK coordinators over a three-year period of time and extensive interviews and classroom observations in four case study districts.

Key Findings and Recommendations

Findings and recommendations for enhancing the Universal Prekindergarten Program are highlighted under seven main topics:

1. Child Care Resource and Referral Agency Involvement in UPK Implementation

Child care resource and referral agencies have been actively involved in UPK by serving on advisory boards and committees, discussing UPK with parents, providing technical assistance and training to day care centers and other providers, and advocacy. CCR&R agency directors and staff also provided specific assistance to school districts. Examples included developing Request for Proposal forms, providing data on what services are available and the demand for services for four-year-olds, meeting with superintendents, attending public hearings, acting as a liaison between the community and school districts, publicizing UPK to community-based providers, and developing written guidebooks for school districts.

• **Recommendation 1:** A more complete compilation of examples of proactive involvement by CCR&Rs should be collected, distributed, and used to provide direction and suggestions for other agency directors or stakeholders interested in contributing to the realization of UPK in their local communities.

2. Magnitude of Potential UPK Impact on Infants and Toddlers

During the 1999-2000 year, community-based providers served approximately 50% of
the upstate UPK children and 60% of the New York City UPK children.2 Almost one-half of upstate child care centers and nursery schools used as UPK sites for four-year-olds, and about one-third of those in New York City, also served infants and toddlers (0-3 year-olds). Data suggest that about 10% of all upstate child care centers received UPK funds during this period.

• **Recommendation 2:** Child care resource and referral agencies should gather data on the number and types of programs in their county that receive UPK funds and monitor how this changes over time as UPK reaches full implementation.

3. Receiving UPK Funds

In all but one responding county, the CCR&R agency directors and staff reported that some programs serving infants and toddlers received Universal Prekindergarten funding while others did not. In many cases, only a small number of programs applied for funding. Some programs opted out because they did not have either a qualified teacher or sufficient space, they did not need the funding, the application process was lengthy, the deadline or opportunity for application was not well publicized or not publicized at all, or the funds were kept largely within the school district. Also in a number of cases, programs applied for funding but did not receive it. In the UPK directors' survey, the respondents indicated a number of barriers that prevented community-based organizations from participating in UPK. Most frequently mentioned for upstate districts were inadequate staff qualifications, lack of available space, the amount of funding available, and poor quality programs. New York City directors mentioned staff qualifications, poor quality of programs, inadequate location, lack of required licenses, and paperwork requirements.

• **Recommendation 3:** School districts should invite all eligible community-based providers to participate in UPK and make the application process as clear as possible. School districts should collaborate with CCR&Rs and other organizations to provide assistance to programs currently ineligible to help them make improvements and meet the necessary qualifications.

2 K. S. Lekies and M. Cochran, Collaborating for Kids: New York State Universal Prekindergarten 1999-2000 (Ithaca, NY: The Cornell Early Childhood Program, 2001). This document is available from the Cornell Early Childhood Program or through the website at www.human.cornell.edu/hd/cecp/.

• **Recommendation 4:** Analysis should be made of the district plans and budgets, particularly in those districts in which funding is considered to be a major barrier to community-based participation in UPK. A closer examination of these budgets-and the needs of community-based programs.will provide the State and district planners with information about the costs of providing UPK services, the challenges faced by local programs, and recommendations for those districts struggling with funding. These efforts will also provide information that can be used to advocate for additional funding if necessary.

4. Perceived Impacts on Services to Infants and Toddlers

The majority of the CCR&R agency directors and staff indicated that Universal Prekindergarten either had not affected or had increased the overall supply of childcare for infants and toddlers in their districts. Many explained that UPK has expanded the supply of child care either by allowing existing programs to increase their number of slots or by stimulating the establishment of new child care programs. Others maintained that UPK does not serve enough children yet to impact the overall availability of child care. Only two of the 30 CCR&R directors interviewed indicated that UPK has reduced the overall supply of child care in their districts. These findings are consistent with CCR&R survey data indicating little change in infant and toddler care due to UPK. Data from the UPK surveys revealed that districts did not place a high priority on the potential impact of UPK on 0-3 year-old services when choosing their UPK sites. o Recommendation 5: Child care programs that have closed or are under enrolled since the implementation of UPK should be studied in more detail to determine if this is in any way linked to UPK. This information could be used to determine how such unanticipated consequences can be avoided.

5. Competition for Four-Year-Olds

The majority of agency directors and staff described competition for four-year-olds as a result of UPK as a "non-issue" for a number of reasons: 1) the demand for child care in their districts far exceeded the supply; 2) UPK does not serve enough children yet to cause competition; or 3) a half-day UPK program does not draw children away from other full-day programs. A minority of agency directors explained that UPK has increased competition in their districts simply by adding another childcare option. Only one agency director reported that enrollment has been affected in existing programs as a result of this competition.

• **Recommendation 6:** Advisory boards and school districts should keep in mind thepossible impacts on the local child care market when deciding how to implement UPK. They should consider the number of four-year-olds in their area unserved by any early care and education program, the perceived need for early care and education for these four-year-olds, the need for full-day services, and the capacity of existing programs when determining whether UPK should be more school- or community-based.

6. Community Concerns

In most cases, CCR&R agency directors and staff expressed more concern about other issues surrounding Universal Prekindergarten than about competition for four-year-olds and effects on the overall supply of services. They cited lack of collaboration or consultation with existing child care providers, the half-day nature of the program, lack of transportation, lack of universality, fears about developmentally inappropriate practices and lowering the age of academic push, funding issues, and the certified teacher requirement as major community concerns.

• **Recommendation 7:** Advisory boards should include a broad range of community child care providers, and school districts should consult with community child care providers when planning how to implement UPK.

• **Recommendation 8:** Child care resource and referral agencies are strongly encouraged to gather information from parents of three-year-olds about anticipated needs for full-day care and work with school districts in designing programming to meet those needs.

• **Recommendation 9:** The state is encouraged to amend transportation aid to allow for reimbursement of the transportation of four-year-olds, consistent with the existing school-age reimbursement policies and procedures.

• **Recommendation 10:** Greater emphasis should be given to serving families across the full range of socio-economic levels and family types.

• **Recommendation 11:** School districts are strongly encouraged to pay close attention to discrepancies in the salaries of certified teachers in school-based and community-based UPK programs and seek ways to bolster the salaries of UPK teachers in community based programs.

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Statement on School Readiness and Quality Early Care
June 2002

Quality Early Care and Education Helps Parents Work and Children Thrive

Everyone agrees - school success begins in the early years. Children who start behind, stay behind. In spite of this universal agreement, Florida's school readiness programs generally lack funds to ensure the availability of affordable and quality early care for all children.

As a result, a disturbing number of children in Florida enter school unprepared to learn, and most early care centers experience problems with providing quality services.

Children, families and society experience the hardships. Not only is remediation expensive and sometimes unsuccessful, but the future costs are staggering as well - children who are denied quality early care are less likely to graduate from high school, complete college or a vocational program, get a good job, and buy a home. It's a classic case of pay now or pay later. In fact, each dollar spent now saves $3 to $7 later in remedial education, crime, and other costs.

Frequent voters clearly understand the importance of making a statewide commitment to quality early care and education (ECE). Over 80% of voters agree that Florida needs to do everything it can to ensure that every child enters school ready to learn and that supporting working families with high quality child care would both help parents and pave the way for a more productive workforce.

What to do?

Make quality child care more affordable and accessible for families, in programs where trained staff earn adequate pay and benefits, and families are involved. Legislators have the power to positively affect early care and education. The issues are inter-related and the funding streams are complex, so the big picture has to be kept in mind while details are addressed.

Background Information

The need for quality early care and education is a daily concern for parents.

- Three out of five young children under 6 are in child care.
- Some 70% of Moms (and 98% of Dads) with children under 6 are in the labor force, and most of their families need the income to stay out of poverty.

Good early care and education is unaffordable for many families, and not enough financial help is available for them.

- Adequate full-day ECE in Florida costs upwards of $100 to $150 or more a week, more than most families can afford.
- Financial aid for ECE is limited. Families living on $25,000/year are too rich for even partial scholarships. Families must be below 150% of federal poverty level-FPL to qualify. FPL for a family of four is $17,650.
- At the top end of the eligibility scale the family co-pay is at least $50/week. This supplements the scholarship, which pays child care costs up to a fixed rate (similar to fixed prices for medical services).
- Even at the current poverty-level income limits, Florida has some 40,000 children on waiting lists for financial aid. Parents turn to marginal and possibly harmful child care because they cannot afford better services.

Quality early care and education is hard to find.

- Child care is a market-driven service, affected by parent (in)ability to pay. Parent demand for low-priced service drives prices down. This depresses quality, and drives down staff qualifications and wages.
- Fewer than 25% of Florida's licensed child care programs are accredited. Accreditation is a way of ensuring quality programming beyond minimum licensing for health and safety.
- Cosmetologists are required to have far more training than staff working in ECE programs; Florida child care teachers need to complete only 40-contact hours of training by the end of their first year of employment.
- Parking lot attendants are paid more than many child care staff. The average teacher wage in Florida ECE programs is $7/hour. Few have benefits like medical insurance or paid sick leave.
- Nearly 4 out of 10 child care teachers leave their jobs each year; high turnover interferes with quality and hinders children's learning.

Early care and education helps shape children's futures.

- Research demonstrates that children's experiences early in life have a decisive, long-lasting impact on their later development and learning. High quality care beginning in early childhood improves children's school success.
- Longitudinal studies confirm that investment in the early years pays off handsomely in reduced school failure, lowered juvenile delinquency, and reduced social service costs.

The early care and education infrastructure in Florida is undergoing revision.

- 1999 School Readiness legislation (FS 411.01) established a State Partnership and county-based local School Readiness Coalitions to oversee the use of federal, state, and local dollars for early education and care, and placed statewide governing authority with the Agency for Workforce Innovation-AWI.
- In the effort to combine child care financial aid and state pre-kindergarten funds, the legislatively-mandated structure of pre-K was repealed and cost-allocation for both programs was brought to the low level of child care fixed price.
- Support for after-school care may be jeopardized as the focus shifts from meeting child care needs to addressing "school readiness."
- A recent OPPAGA (government accountability) report raised concerns about the success of the School Readiness process, mostly due to infrastructure limitations.

Current Legislative Issues Affecting Early Care and Education in 2002-03

1. **PreKindergarten.**
   A referendum will likely be on the November ballot requiring the legislature to fund quality ECE services for all 4-year-olds at no charge to families. Notable issues:
   - Universal voluntary access. The effort to make PreK accessible to all families removes it from the vulnerable political place where services for vulnerable families generally reside.
   - Multiple providers. Following the successful example of other states, services may be offered by a variety of providers including private child care centers, community agencies, private schools and public school districts. A multiple provider approach recognizes the ability of the child care industry to meet child and family needs, and recognizes the lack of facility space in public schools.
   - Full funding for quality. This will take money. It costs between $6000-10,000 a year per child (depending on standards) to provide adequate ECE services that will help 4-year-olds become school ready.
   - Full time. Providing full-day and full-year care options is important for meeting the needs of employed parents.
   - Standards. Quality standards should be specified for such a universal program, especially for staff qualifications and adult-child ratios and group sizes.

In the effort to achieve universally accessible services for 4-year-olds it is important that the early care and education of children from birth-4 not be ignored.

2. **Financial Aid.**
   There is simply too little public funding for child care financial aid. Most families cannot afford quality care; financial assistance must be offered to parents. Federal dollars (Child Care and Development Block Grant-CCDBG and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families-TANF) make up the lion's share, supplemented by state funds to draw down the federal dollars.
   - More dollars. For all of the 30 years of subsidized child care's existence in Florida, there have been waiting lists of eligible but un-served families. More dollars must be identified for financial aid.
   - Higher eligibility ceiling. Financial aid is only for the very poor; the eligibility ceiling for financial aid should be raised to the federally-allowed 85% state median income (about 250% federal poverty level) so that low and moderate-income families can access quality care.
   - Float quality up. Additional financial aid in the hands of consumers is expected to allow the quality of ECE to slowly rise as the marketplace supports higher prices for quality services.

3. **Quality Enhancement.**
   Incentives must be offered to providers to supply higher quality ECE services, supported by regulation of the industry and accountability measures.
   - Rates for services. Higher negotiated rates must be paid to achieve higher quality ECE services. The School Readiness law limits the ability of local coalitions to pay for quality. The only flexibility in fixed rate is an incentive of up to 20% allowed for programs accredited by approved Gold Seal accrediting systems. The rate limitation clause needs to be changed to achieve quality.
   - Support for quality. Improvement in child care quality is furthered by technical assistance and training directed to child care staff. Funding for technical assistance and training needs to be expanded.
   - Regulations. Florida child care licensing regulations need to be more stringent, especially for ratios. Florida law allows about twice as many children per staff member for 2, 3, and 4-year-old children as is recommended by the National Association for the Education of Young Children. While licensing allows 20 four-year-olds per adult, the repealed pre-kindergarten standards allowed only 10, matching NAEYC guidelines. A lone Florida caregiver is allowed to have full responsibility for the education and care of eleven (11) two-year-olds!

4. **Staff Training.**
   Incentives must be offered to the early care workforce to complete training and higher education.
   - TEACH scholarship and stipend program - Teacher Education And Compensation Help. To improve the condition of the low-paid, ill-trained child care workforce, funding and incentives must be available for training and higher education. Major expansion is needed of the successful TEACH program. TEACH provides financial aid scholarships so that staff can complete the 120-hour CDA training or an Associate's degree in child development. TEACH also provides an incentive stipend if the participants remain in their job for a year, helping to ameliorate the low-wage problem and reduce turnover.
   - Results. As staff achieve additional training, the market is expected to bear a demand for higher wages for the people caring for our children. Increased staff training results in better program quality and in better outcomes for children.

Improvements are inter-related. Increased financial aid to consumers makes higher quality standards possible; quality depends on an educated workforce receiving equitable compensation.

Essential for achieving the desired outcome of children who are ready and eager to continue learning when they enter school: significant expansion of public funding to help families afford quality early education and care.

It's not big government. It's responsive government, meeting the needs of Florida's youngest children and their parents.

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